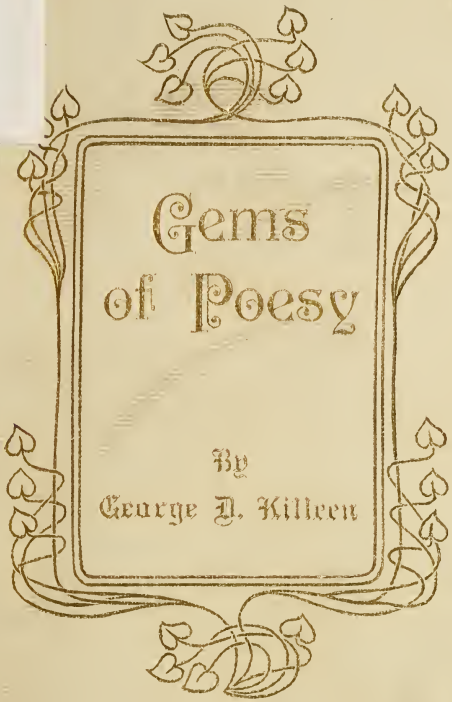


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Gems of Poesy

By

GEORGE D. KILLEEN



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Introduction

I send thee forth,
My Little Book,
To find, I trust,
Some sheltering nook,
A welcome to
Some home.

May critics all
Be kind to you,
And keep this single
Thought in view:
Thy Mission is
To cheer.

Thy Author, though
Of humble fame,
Would fan again
That sacred flame
Of Love in each
Sad heart.

If some poor
Sailor, tempest tossed,
Can see the Beacon,
Long since lost,
What matters talent, time,
Or cost?

ATHENS, MICH.

Contents

INTRODUCTION, - - - - -	3
CHRISTMAS BELLS, - - - - -	7
THE GLADIATOR'S NEW YEAR, - - - - -	9
ST. PATRICK'S DAY,- - - - -	10
THE GOLDEN WEDDING, - - - - -	12
OUR BOY IS THIRTY-TWO, - - - - -	13
NEW YEAR'S GREETING TO A LADY, - - - - -	13
GRANDPA FORGOT THE BLESSING, - - - - -	14
DESIRE FOR SPIRITUAL GIFTS, - - - - -	15
STABILITY AND VERSATILITY, - - - - -	17
AUTUMNAL MEDITATIONS, - - - - -	18
THE CRYSTAL WEDDING, - - - - -	20
THE AGED SAINT, - - - - -	22
EROS AND PSYCHE, - - - - -	23
THE SEA VOYAGE, - - - - -	27



Ring on! Ye heralds of Christ's birth;
Sound louder each succeeding peal,
Till thronging millions of the earth
Before the "King of Glory" kneel.



A Christmas Poem

What mean the pealing of the bells
Upon this frosty wintry morn?
What joy can come at such a time;
The world seems desolate, forlorn.

The earth is wrapt in snowy robes,
All bare and cheerless are the trees,
The people shiver with the cold
And seek a shelter from each breeze.

Why mirthful, then, should ring the bells;
What cheer can come at such a time?
Hark! Angels near us seem to say
This is a morning most sublime.

List to the songs the angels sing!
The very vault of Heaven seems riven.
In Bethlehem a Child is born;
To earth the Savior Christ is given.

Sing on! Sing on! Ye Heavenly host!
We'll join the chorus, loud and strong.
We hail the new born "Prince of Peace;"
To Heaven and earth the strains belong.

Sing, "Glory to Our God on High,"
"Peace on the earth, good will to man."
Go forth and spread the glorious news,
And tell men of God's wondrous plan.

Ring on! Ye heralds of Christ's birth;
Sound louder each succeeding peal,
Till thronging millions of the earth
Before the "King of Glory" kneel.

Let's bow before the new born King;
Bring treasures rich from every mine.
Tell children what the bells now mean,
And bring them to the sacred shrine.

Then hail the Babe of Bethlehem;
We greet Thee, Prince of Life and Love.
Ring loud the bells of Christmas here,
Then praise Him in His courts above.

O Christ, Thou blessed Son of God,
For us Thy precious life was given;
We gladly own Thee as our Lord,
And crown Thee as the King of Heaven.



A New Year Poem

A gallant Knight, he drew his sword,
Ne'er sheathed again his trusty blade;
But wounded, bleeding, dying now,
His giant form to earth is laid.

The Old Year, like a gladiator, dying,
In heart beats is his story told;
His hours and moments quickly flying,
And yet he leaves a legacy of gold.

His Victor, standing at the portal,
Would rush, impatient, to the stage;
He, yet untried, but young and hopeful,
Would write the world a fairer page.

The New Year, like the early morning,
Gives portent of a glorious day;
But who that spent this year in scorning,
Will sing in next a sweeter lay?

Did not this Year bring us rich treasure;
Bring to our lives the pure and best?
Did we refuse to give full measure,
And curse where we should only bless?

Should he, then, have another year
Who failed so signally in this?
Should doubt, despondency, or fear
Cause him Love's choicest gift to miss?

No, this must be a glorious Year,
Let's try our best to make it so.
Call down from Heaven its gifts most dear,
And pour them on the world below.

Breathe out a Prayer to Him who loves;
Ask Him to arm you for the fight.
Put on the panoply of Faith,
Trust God and try to do the Right.



St. Patrick's Day Poem

I have been in many countries,
And have wandered many a mile;
But me heart is ever yearning
For the dear old Emerald Isle.

There are gems in every ocean,
And some islands strangely fair,
But with me dear "Old Ireland"
None of them can quite compare.

O! how oft I've viewed the waters
Of the far-famed Lake Killarney,
All enraptured by the music
Of me darlint's Irish blarney.



Be the powers of St. Patrick!
I'll go sailing back some day;
It's there I'll lay me body down
To mingle with her clay.

The Yankees they are hustlers,
And in business have the "git,"
But as dull as Pharaoh's mummy
Were it not for Irish wit.

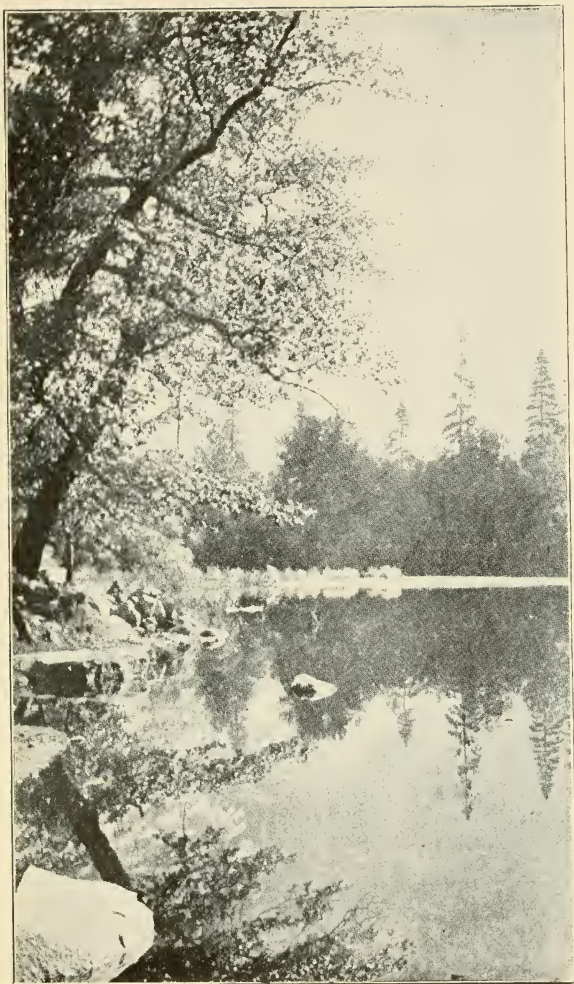
You may ride your automobile
Without jostle, jolt, or jar,
But give me the gentle jogging
Of the Irish jaunting car.



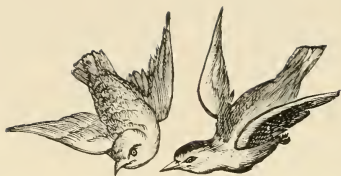
You may heap up all your treasure,
And your jewels rich and rare,
But I'd rather be an Irishman
Than to be a millionaire.

St. Patrick held a Shamrock up,
He had plucked it from the sod,
He saw its three-leaved Trinity
And compared it to his God.

If I forget St. Patrick's Day,
Or refuse to wear the Green,
Then Old Ireland's not me country
And me name is not Killeen.



O! how oft I've viewed the waters
Of the far-famed Lake Killarney,
All enraptured by the music
Of my darlint's Irish blarney.



The Golden Wedding

Your faithful life
As man and wife,
Through Fifty Years.
My own heart cheers
To sow fair seeds
Of "Golden" deeds.

You've tilled the soil
With earnest toil,
And garnered grain
Through sun and rain.
I've shared your hoard
Around the festal board.

Your sun sinks low,
But with a glow;
A twilight fair
For such a pair;
A radiance bright
That has no night.

Walk down the slope
With faith and hope;
Ne'er mind the rod,
But trust in God.
Your Golden Days
Should end in Praise.

Racing Toward His Prime

Our oldest Boy a Man has grown,
No more a child, we know 't is true;
And "Racing" quickly toward his Prime.
He tells us he is thirty-two.

As swiftly flows the River on,
So fleeting are the passing years;
Our hearts are often filled with joy,
But oft our eyes are full of tears.

We've marked thy growth from babyhood,
And seen thee climbing up life's hill;
We loved thee as a prattling child,
Yes, loved thee then and love thee still.

Our memories oft recall thy birth,
Thy childhood, boyhood, and thy youth;
Be strong, my Boy, and play the Man;
Grow stalwart, bold, and love the truth.



New Year's Greeting to a Young Lady

May many a prospect bright unfurl
Before thy vision, brilliant girl.
May Providence be kind to you,
And bring you pleasures, not a few.
May Hope and Faith and brightest Cheer
Bring Blessings, many, through the year.
May Heaven's choicest gifts be thine,
And fill thy life with Light Divine.

Grandpa Forgot the Blessing

Little Georgia at the table,
Saw her Grandpa come in late;
She watched his every movement,
Saw him put food on his plate.

“Ask Jesus,” said the baby,
As she looked up in his face;
It was then that he remembered
He’d neglected saying Grace.

Oh! how oft a child reproves us,
And we think of Him who said
That His Father feeds the ravens,
And provides our daily bread.

Thus a little child oft leads us
To the Kingdom of His Love;
And unless we are more like them
We shall miss our home above.

Precious Georgia, little darling,
Understood not what she said;
But taught others at the table
To thank God for daily bread.



A Desire for Spiritual Equipment

How oft, in drouth, we pray:
“Lord, send a gracious shower;
The parched earth refresh,
And make it bud and flower.

“We feel Thy Spirit’s gifts
Are Heaven’s choicest dower.
They come down from above
For each sad, trying hour.

“How much we need Thy help!
Baptize us with Thy power,
Till tall and strong we grow,
And like great giants tower.

“To dare to do—to strive,
Seeking to save the lost;
And with the Savior toil,
No matter what the cost.”

Then gird your armor on,
Ye servants of the King.
Go forth, the battle win,
And home rich trophies bring.

Ne’er think your duty done;
Toil till the Setting Sun.
Work for your Savior faithfully
Till you some souls have won.

The Master knows your toil—
He trod the way before—
And says, "Lay by thy shield;
You'll need it never more."

Then shout your triumphs out,
Make Heaven's arches ring.
All honor to His name,
Who reigns Eternal King!



Stability and Versatility

[Dedicated to the Athens High School as a Christmas token, 1911.]

If we grovel on Earth
Seeking only for mirth,
We may slip in the mire
And never rise higher.

O! how fair are the hills
Where sweet incense distills,
See! these are God's bowers;
O! what beautiful flowers.

There are songs in the air,
And bright birds everywhere;
In sweet carols they vie
Till their notes reach the sky.

Then look up to the hills
Till your whole being thrills
With a constant desire
To ever climb higher.

Come, each worthy task do,
Keep your Acme in view;
Holy Faith should inspire
Till your soul is on fire.

O! how noble that life
That through turmoil and strife
Pure, refined, and yet bold,
Writes its name in pure gold.

With steadfast STABILITY,
And with quick VERSATILITY,
Inscribe your own name
On the Tablet of Fame.

Autumnal Meditations

As the summer days are ending,
And the cold and heat seem blending;
While the autumn rains descending
Swell a little brook that's wending
Cold and clear;

Passed and gone the mild September.
We have reached the ides November;
Soon, now, comes the bleak December,
Twelfth and last, sad, dying member
Of this year.

Like the little brooklet wending,
From the hills and vales descending,
So our lives seem ever tending;
Mid the lights and shadows blending
Hope and fear.

So our months and years are going,
And the chilly winds now blowing
Indicate 't will soon be snowing;
Thus I can not help foreknowing
Winter 's near.

Thoughts of joys and sorrows blending
Make me feel the days, now ending,
Should be to the future lending—
To the poor, sad toilers sending
Christian cheer.

For God's love and care paternal
Let me dwell 'mid scenes supernal,
Where the fields are ever vernal,
And, I grasp the life eternal
Even here.

Do the days seem dark or clear
At the closing of the year?
Are there blendings, hope, and fear?
Do you feel the winter's near?
Let me whisper Christian cheer,
Trembling soul, your Lord is near;
Do not fear.



Like the little brooklet wending,
From the hills and vales descending,
So our lives seem ever tending,
'Mid the lights and shadows blending
Hope and fear.

The Crystal Wedding

What a patter on the roof,
Seeking sleep is all in vain;
What a tingle on the shingle,
Naught is heard but falling rain.

There's a wedding on to-night,
What you hear is tripping feet.
For the Rain and Frost have wed,
And their union is complete.

What you think a storm of sleet
Is a host of guests now treading,
Making music with their feet
Going to a Crystal Wedding.

At a marriage in far Cana
Christ made wine the host to please.
But God was at this wedding,
Hanging crystals on the trees.

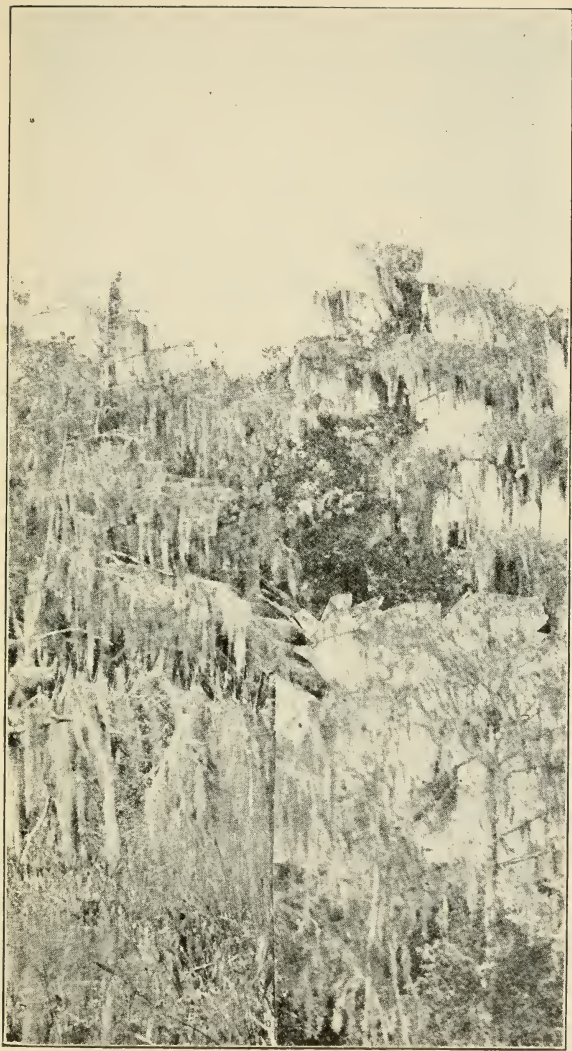
O! what a Crystal Wedding,
Earth's Cathedral jeweled rare;
Sun now kiss all into sparkle
For this royal wedded pair.

We have heard of costly weddings,
And of brides surpassing fair;
But when Frost puts on her trousseau
None of them with her compare.

Such a wealth of sparkling beauty
These, mine eyes, have never seen.
When God hung His pendent crystals
'Mid the sprigs of evergreen.

"Sea of glass mingled with fire,"
Thus God's glories on us shine;
Let angelic hosts adore Him
For this wonder most sublime.

When you celebrate your wedding
Make the Holy One your guest;
Let Him decorate your palace,
For His jewels are the best.



At a wedding in far Cana,
Christ made wine the host to please,
But God was at this wedding,
Hanging crystals on the trees.

The Aged Saint

Fourscore and five—can it be true!
How many a shower of misty dew
Have damped thy brow!

How many a bright and Mystic spell,
And many a saddened funeral knell
Thy days have known!

The years, they come and go so fast,
And seem as but a dream when past,
A shadow flitting by.

They came, they grew, then waned and died;
Or rushed in like the Occantide—
Receded, and were gone.

Brown tresses fair have turned to gray,
And yet you walk your Pilgrim way
Without complaint.

“To trouble, born as sparks do fly,”
Yet, feeling that your Lord is nigh,
Thy fears are few.

The Saint, though bent upon a staff,
May from Celestial fountains quaff
Sweet Nectar's dew.

The hoary head, with glory crowned,
In ways of Righteousness, if found,
Shall wear a Diadem.



Eros and Psyche

*[Or Love Pursuing the Soul in the Spring Time
of Life.]*

Old Winter did his fetters forge,
Binding the river in the gorge;
And forest, field, and vale and hill
Were held as captives at his will.

South winds blew hard from day to day;
“Old Sol” came forth with genial ray;
Spring broke from Winter with a bound,
And verdure covered all the ground.

O! happy, sparkling, joyous Spring,
Cast forth thy fetters with a fling;
Let brook and rivulet and rill
Go laughing, dancing down the hill.

Trill, birdie, trill your joyous lay,
And make of this a gladsome day.
Weigh carefully each golden note;
Let music on the breezes float.

Sing, birdie, sing; this is the May,
The happiest time, the poets say,
For all the creatures of God’s care
To bask in love divinely rare.

O! happy time for happy youth,
When innocence, love, virtue, truth
Control the mind and sway the will,
And oft the soul with rapture thrill.

Such was the time when Psyche, fair,
Walked forth, displaying graces rare;
When Eros met her on the road,
And gazing on her beauty, stood.

She thought to hide her pretty face
And veiled it with a gauze of lace.
He raised his bow, on mischief bent,
And to her heart an arrow sent.

O! Eros, cruel God of love,
Who sent thee from thy home above?
Why dost thou come at every May,
To steal our fairest ones away?

Is there no trysting place or bower
A girl can hide from Cupid's power?
Is there no refuge, home, or goal
Where love will not pursue the soul?

Then call the maiden what you will,
You'll find young Eros watching still:
Then call her Juliet, Psyche, May,
Cupids round her home will pay.

O! many a trembling, fluttering heart
Has felt the sting of Cupid's dart.
He'll take the fairest flowers, they say;
Expect him, love, when comes the May.

Compared to truest, purest love
Is that of God who reigns above.
He oft pursues the timid soul
And draws it to its Heavenly goal.



Is there no trysting place or bower
A girl can hide from Cupid's power?
Is there no refuge, home, or goal
Where love will not pursue the soul?

O! purest, fairest, trembling maid,
Why art thou of thy Lord afraid?
Turn to Him now thy blushing face
And let Him fill thee with His grace.

O! Blessed Holy Trinity,
Thou art the soul's affinity.
Pillow her head upon thy breast,
And give this wounded maiden rest.

Come Christ, Thou blessed One, I pray,
Conduct fair Psyche on her way;
Lead to the fields of endless light,
And clothe Thy Bride in spotless white.

Eros, God of Love.
Psyche, the Soul.
(See *Greek Legend*.)



The Sea Voyage

*[Dedicated to my faithful wife, who has gone singing through
thirty-six years of sunshine and shadow.]*

I have read of a loving, saintly seer
Who was banished to an island drear,
And he dreamed of a city pure and bright
Where storms ne'er beat, there was no night.
He saw "Gates of Pearl" and "Streets of Gold"
And saints that never more grow old;
Heard songs of love that never tire,
Sung by a great celestial choir.

I would seek that city beyond the tide,
But the ocean is stormy and deep and wide.
I would like to cross, but I fear to sail,
For the wind blows oft a fearful gale;
But come, my love, for a walk with me,
I'm going down by the restless sea.
Where waves roll high from shore to shore,
And strike the rocks with a sullen roar.

There must be demons in the deep,
Else why should the ocean sob and weep?
The waves seem tired and want to rest
Like a weary child on its mother's breast.
When the wind goes down they will not weep,
And, weary of strife, will fall asleep.
See! the sun is sinking in the west;
O! stormy sea, lie down and rest.

O! Glorious sight, see the sun retire
From a "Sea of Glass mingled with fire."
O! What a moment for one who dreams
The ocean sparkles with golden beams.
O! What glorious sight for inspired souls
Whose thoughts fly oft beyond the poles.
O! I know, that the ocean is deep and wide,
But I long for the city beyond its tide.

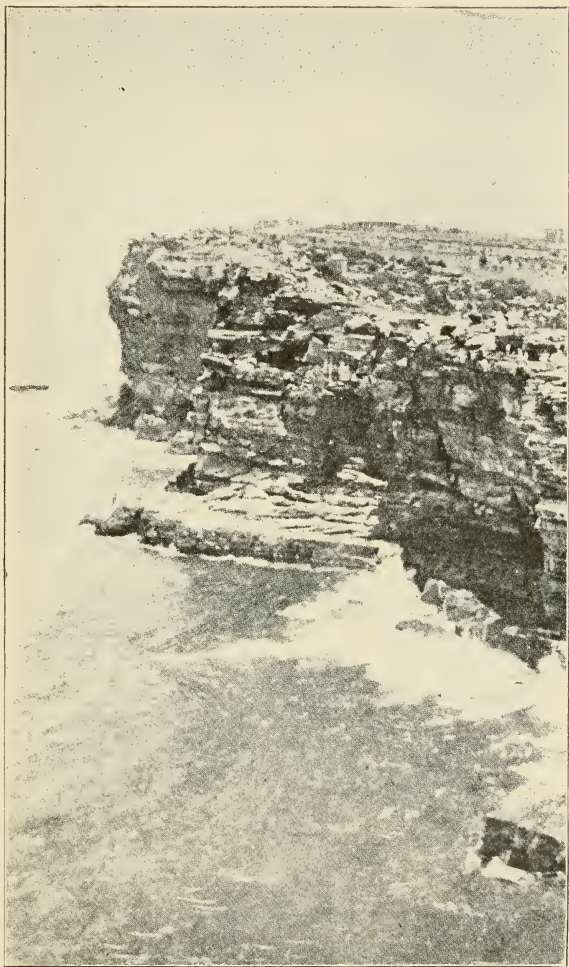
When the moon's beams kiss its silver spray
We will launch our bark and sail away;
I'll be captain and you my mate
As we guide our craft to the Golden Gate.
With you, my trustful, loving wife,
I can brave the fiercest storms of life;
But should strong winds disturb our sea
We'll think of that storm on Galilee.

When the disciples cried in wild despair,
That we perish, Lord, hast Thou no care,
And with that earnest, anxious cry,
Awoke their Lord, who was sleeping nigh.
He arose, and, with a God-like will,
Said to the angry sea, "Be still."
O! what a Christ then must He be
To chain the demons of the sea?

Did He thus save their fragile bark?
Will He guide ours through the dark?
Let's trust Him through the starless night,
Yes, trust Him till the morning light.
We'll read His chart to guide our way
And watch the compass at its play.
Can oceans deep or storms appall
If Christ is listening for our call?

O! Friendly Beacon, let Thy light
Shine o'er our voyage, clear and bright;
Life saving crew on the other side
Scan our ocean far and wide.
We've almost reached the "Harbor Bar,"
Swing wide the "Gates that stand ajar;"
The sailor and his trustful bride
Have almost crossed the ocean wide.

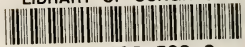




“O! Come my love for a walk with me,
I’m going down by the restless sea,
Where the waves dash high from shore to shore,
And strike the rocks with a sullen roar.”

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